NATION

**Bihar Oppn protests over denial of special status**

≫ Page: 5 ≪

BUSINESS

**Market tumbles post Budget**

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

**India beat Nepal by 82 runs to qualify for semis of women's Asia Cup**

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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# Jobs, tax revamp at heart of Budget

## Sitharaman makes history with 7th Budget; Total expenditure pegged at Rs 48.21 L cr

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Standard deduction hiked to ₹75,000. This is a tax benefit where ₹75,000 can be subtracted from income before calculating tax
- Angel tax for investors abolished
- Internship opportunities to 1 cr youths in top 500 firms. Students will get ₹5,000 allowance along with 1 time payment of ₹6,000. Firms will bear 10% of internship cost
- One-month wage to all people newly entering the workforce in all formal sectors
- NPS contribution limit for employers in private sector raised from 10% to 14% of the employee's basic salary
- ₹2L cr provided for skilling of 4.1 cr youths
- ₹10L loans for higher education in domestic institute with 3% interest rate
- 1 cr houses to get 300 units of free power from rooftop solar panel under PM Suryaghar Muft Bijli Yojna
- ₹2.2 lakh cr for 1 cr houses for urban poor and middle class families under the PMAY-U
- Setting up of working women hostels with collaborations with firms
- ₹900 cr given for Khelo India
- ₹1.28 lakh cr for telecom; BSNL gets lion's share of ₹82,916 cr
- ₹1.5L cr for long-term interest free loans for infra
- Vishnupad, Mahabodhi corridors to be transformed into world-class tourist spot
- Corporate tax rate on foreign companies reduced from 40% to 35%
- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana was extended for 5 years, benefitting more than 80 crore people
- Delay for payment of TDS up to due date of filing statement

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman outlined a robust plan focusing on jobs, MSME, agriculture sector, startups, and economic growth amid global uncertainties while presenting Union Budget 2024-25 on Tuesday.

India's inflation remains low and stable, progressing towards the 4 per cent target, with core inflation (excluding food and fuel) at 3.1 per cent.

Sitharaman's speech for the 2024 Union Budget was her briefest to date, lasting 86 minutes.

Sitharaman emphasised the interim budget's focus on four key groups: the poor (Garib), women (Mahilayen), youth (Yuva), and farmers (Annadata).

Sitharaman unveiled the Prime Minister's package, which includes five schemes aimed at providing employment, skills, and opportunities for 41 million youth over the next five years, with a central allocation of Rs 2 lakh crore.

For the 'Viksit Bharat' vision, the budget outlines nine priorities to foster opportunities for all.

This year, Rs 1.48 lakh crore is earmarked for education, employment, and skill development. The Model Skill Loan Scheme will be revised to offer loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh with government-backed guarantees, benefiting 25,000 students annually. For 2024-25, total receipts (excluding borrowings) are estimated at Rs 32.07 lakh crore, and total expenditure at Rs 48.21 lakh crore. Net tax receipts are projected at Rs 25.83 lakh crore, with a fiscal deficit estimated at 4.9 per cent of GDP. Gross and net market borrowings are estimated at Rs 14.01 lakh crore and Rs 11.63 lakh crore, respectively. Additionally, the deduction for family pensions has been raised from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000. It also proposes a simplified tax regime for foreign shipping companies involved in domestic cruises, recognising the considerable potential of cruise tourism.

INDIA will protest in Parliament and outside over "discrimination" against the Opposition-ruled states. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin said that their government has decided to boycott the NITI Aayog meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 27 July, as a mark of protest against the "neglect" of the state's demands in the Union Budget.

*—PTI*

***>>>More on Pages 2, 3, 4, 5 & 8***

FM Nirmala Sitharaman with a red pouch carrying Budget papers in New Delhi, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

**WHAT IS CHEAP?**

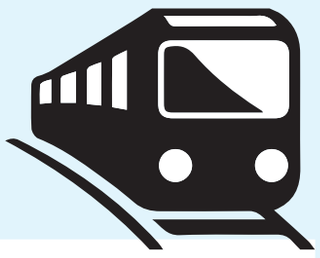
- 3 cancer drugs: Trastuzumab Deruxtecan, Osimertinib, Durvalumab
- Phones & chargers
- Gold, silver, platinum
- Solar panels, solar cells
- Electric vehicles
- Footwear
- Textiles
- Leather goods
- Brood stocks, shrimps and fish feed
- Medical X-ray machines

**WHAT IS COSTLIER?**

- Ammonium nitrate used in fertilisers
- Non-biodegradable plastic
- PVC flex banners
- Telecom equipment
- Solar glass
- Garden umbrellas
- Laboratory chemicals
- Equity investments (20% tax for assets held for less than 1 year)
- 12% tax on shares held for more than 12 months

**RAILWAYS IGNORED?**

While there is a mention of rly projects in Andhra, no specific amount was allocated. This is one of the first times in recent memory that rlys has not been allocated anything under Union Budget. The Railways was mentioned only once in the Budget speech



**The #Budget for Viksit Bharat ensures inclusive growth, benefiting every segment of society and paving the way for a developed India**

-Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

**The Union Budget is a kursi bachao Budget and claimed it makes hollow promises to BJP allies at the cost of other states**

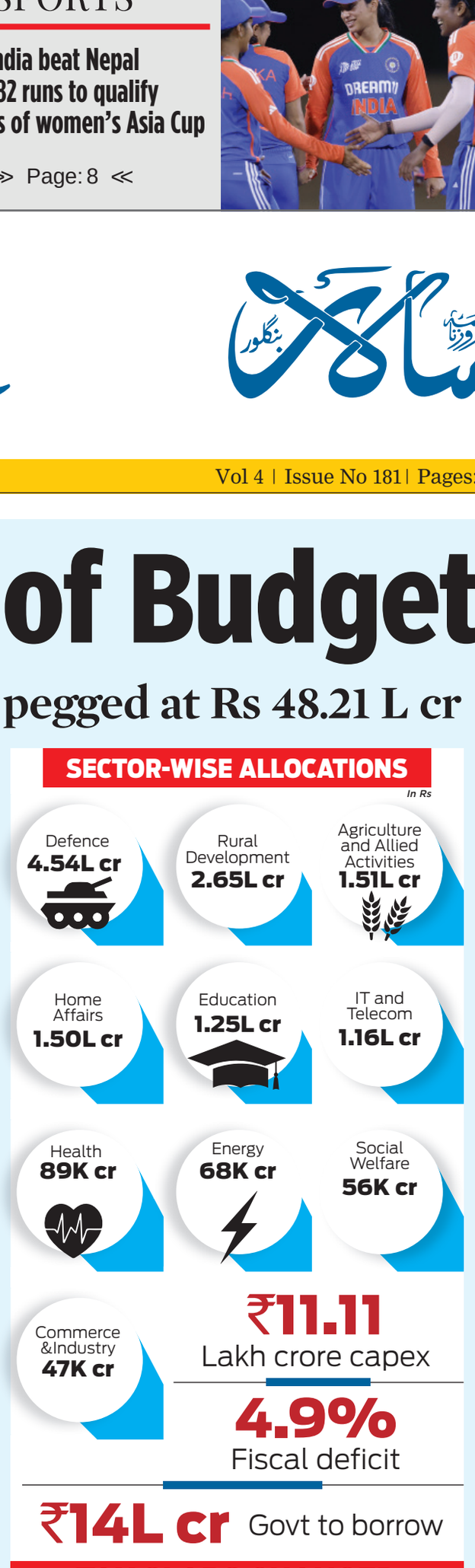
-Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition

**This Budget outlines NDA's nine key priorities for all-round and inclusive development. This Budget will go a long way in making India a $5T economy**

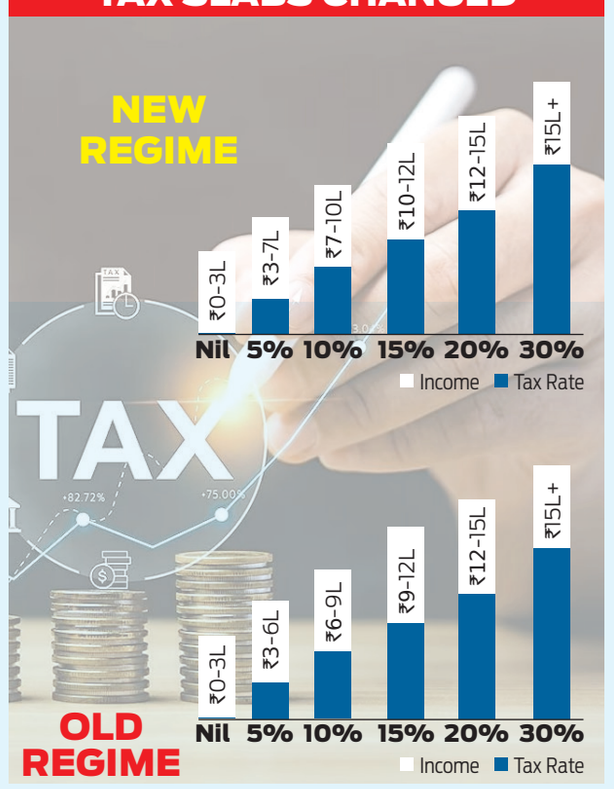
-R Ashoka, Leader of Opposition in K'taka

**SECTOR-WISE ALLOCATIONS**

*In Rs*




**TAX SLABS CHANGED**




# K'taka neglected in *chombu* Budget: CM

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

Terming the Union Budget 2024-25 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as "Chombu" (empty vessel), Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the State has been neglected.

Siddaramaiah has alleged that it fails to address the State's needs and demands. Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, he accused the central government of neglecting Karnataka while favouring other states like Andhra Pradesh and Bihar for political reasons.

Siddaramaiah highlighted that several key requests made by Karnataka during the pre-budget meetings were ignored. This includes the long-awaited funding for the Bhadra Upper Bank Project, for which a grant of Rs 5,300 crore had been previously announced but not provided in the current budget.

He also criticised the lack of financial support for the comprehensive development of Kalyana Karnataka, the Mahadayi Yojana, Mekedatu Yojana, and Krishna Upper Bank Projects, which are crucial for the state's irrigation and water supply needs.

Siddaramaiah lamented the failure to allocate Rs 11,485 crore for the construction of peripheral roads, development of lakes, and urban development projects in Bengaluru, as recommended by the 15th Finance Commission.

He described the budget as "anti-people". He criticised it for neglecting the poor, particularly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Farmers were especially hard hit, with no mention of the Minimum Support Price Act or the implementation of the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations.

*—Salar News*

**HOPES DASHED**

# *SC junks NEET cancellation, says no data to show breach*

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

In a major setback to unsuccessful aspirants of NEET-UG 2024, the Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed the pleas seeking cancellation and re-test of the exam. The court said there was no evidence on record to conclude that it was "vitiated" on account of "systemic breach" of its sanctity.

The interim verdict came as a shot in the arm for the embattled NDA government and National Testing Agency (NTA), which were facing protests over alleged question paper leak, fraud and impersonation in the 5 May test.

Over 23 lakh students took up NEET-UG. A total of 67 students scored a perfect 720 for the first time. Number of toppers dropped from 67 to 61 after NTA revised the results.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra concluded the four day-l ong proceedings where they heard a battery of lawyers, including Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and NTA, and senior advocates Narender Hooda, Sanjay Hegde and Mathews Nedumapra. The CJI said, "There is absence of material on record to lead to conclusion that the result of the examination is vitiated or that there is systemic breach of the sanctity of the exam." It said ordering the test afresh would be replete with serious consequences for over 24 lakh students.

**CJI fumes at lawyer**

The proceedings saw a heated exchange of words between Justice Chandrachud and advocate Nedumpara intent on speaking out of turn. An exasperated Justice Chandrachud said, "You please sit down. I will have to have you removed from the court. I am warning you." The lawyer retorted, "If your lordships don't respect me, I on my own will leave." An annoyed CJI said, "Please call the security. We will ask him to be removed from the court."

*—PTI*

***>>>More on Page 5***

# K'taka passes Greater B'luru Governance Bill

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

Karnataka Legislative Assembly on Tuesday passed Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill which aims at establishing a maximum of 10 City corporations to decentralise municipal administration.

The bill moots the founding of Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) in which Chief Minister will be ex-officio chairperson, the minister in charge of Bengaluru will be Vice-Chairperson and Chief Commissioner of GBA will be ex-officio member secretary. Ministers holding home, urban development, transport and energy portfolios and ministers from Bengaluru will be the ex-officio members.

Apart from them, the Mayors of city corporations, two members from each city corporation nominated by city corporation members will be a part of GBA as members.

All members of Legislative Assembly whose constituencies lie in Greater Bengaluru Area shall be permanent invitees to GBA.

BJP opposed the bill and walked out of the Assembly saying it will divide Bengaluru and its identity will be lost. "Dividing Bengaluru, which was built by Kempegowda, will lead to its curse. We should preserve Bengaluru's beauty," Leader of Opposition R Ashoka said.

The bill was passed in the absence of the Opposition. Later, when Opposition came back to the Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who is in charge of Bengaluru Development, said there would be a meeting on 27 July with the legislators from Bengaluru and the ministers to clear doubts on the bill.

*—Salar News/PTI*

***>>>More on Page 4***

# Working sector gets big sops; agriculture takes a back seat

## Budget outlines 9 priority areas to enhance productivity across sectors

### AGRICULTURE

Farmers will get 109 new high-yielding and climate-resilient varieties of **32 crops**

**1 cr farmers** will be initiated into natural farming in 2 years

**10,000** bio-input resource centres to be established

### EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLING

- Govt will reimburse employers' EPFO contributions of up to ₹3,000/month for 2 yrs for all new hires
- 1st-time employees will get Direct Tax benefit of 1-month salary in 3 instalments to help 210 lakh youths
- Incentive to both employee and employer for EPFO contributions for the first 4 years to benefit 30L youth
- Loans up to ₹7.5 lakh with a guarantee from a government promoted fund and direct E-vouchers to 1 lakh students every year

### HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Purvodaya plan for endowment in Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh
- Amritsar Kolkata Industrial Corridor with development of an industrial node at Gaya
- Rs 3 lakh crore schemes for women and girls
- Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan to improve socio-economic condition of tribal communities covering 63,000 villages

### MANUFACTURING & SERVICES

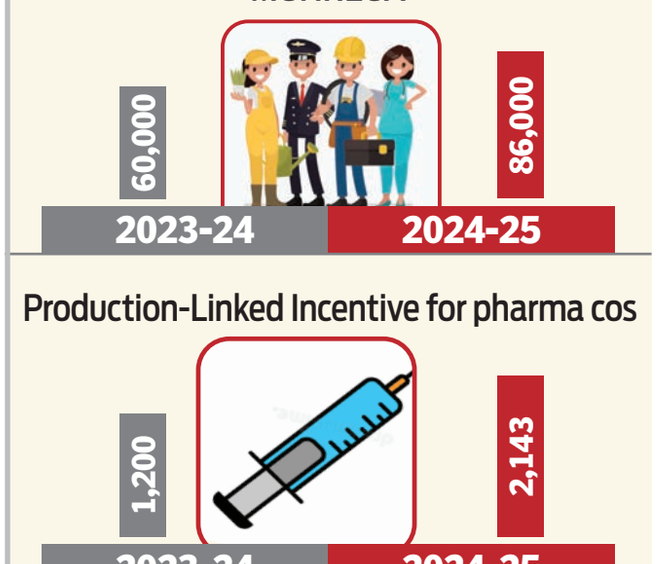
- Mudra loans limit enhanced to Rs 20L from Rs 10 lakh to help entrepreneurs
- Proposal to reduce the turnover threshold of buyers for mandatory onboarding on the TReDS platform from Rs 500 cr to Rs 250 cr

**12 industrial parks** under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme

### URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- Lower stamp duties for properties purchased by women
- Scheme to develop 100 weekly 'haats' or street food hubs in select cities
- Transit Oriented Development plans for 14 large cities with a population above 30 lakh
- Promote water supply, sewage treatment and solid waste management projects and services for 100 large cities through bankable projects
- The Centre has allocated Rs 5,958 crore for the Union Territory of Ladakh, a massive 32% rise from last year's allotment of Rs 4,500 crore
- Rs 309.74 cr for training of govt employees

### EXPENDITURE OF MAJOR ITEMS (IN ₹ CRORE)




### GOVT WAIVES CUSTOM DUTY ON 25 MINERALS TO BOOST PRODUCTION

The government announced waiving customs duty on 25 critical minerals, including lithium, copper and nickel and also reduced the import tariff on two minerals, including graphite.

The move aims at giving a boost to the processing and refining of critical minerals and help obtain their availability for strategic and important sectors like renewable, nuclear energy and telecommunications.

Critical minerals such as antimony, beryllium, bismuth, cobalt, copper, gallium, germanium, hafnium, indium, lithium and Nickel which attracted BCD (Basic Customs Duty) in the range of 2.5 to 10 per cent was brought down to zero. With regard to graphite and silicon quartz/silicon dioxide which attracted import tariff of 5 and 7.5 per cent, the customs duty was brought down to 2.5 per cent.

## FRIENDS INDEED...

**After rejecting Andhra Pradesh and Bihar's proposal for special status, the BJP-led Centre's allocations for the two states underscore the NDA government's reliance on crucial support from TDP and JD(U), which hold 16 and 12 LS seats respectively.**

### ANDHRA PRADESH

**Rs 15,000 cr** for development of capital Amaravati. It is the highest financial aid to Amaravati by Centre in the last 5 years

Financial support for Polavaram irrigation project —which is considered as a lifeline for Andhra and its farmers— and backward districts. Funds announced for water, power, railways and roads in Kopparthy node on Vishakhapatnam-Chennai Industrial Corridor and Orvakal node on Hyderabad-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor

#### AMARAVATI'S HISTORY

After 2014 bifurcation of the state, Andhra had no capital state. Then chief minister Chandrababu Naidu announced Amravati as the capital.

It will jumpstart the stalled capital project after a hiatus of 5 years under the YSRCP government led by YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, who had pushed for executive capital in Visakhapatnam, legislative in Amaravati and judicial in Kurnool

## OPPN MOCKS ANDHRA, BIHAR PERKS

**Amaravati/Patna, 23 July**

The Opposition Parties in both Andhra Pradesh and Bihar did not seem very impressed with the allocations made to their respective states in the Union Budget.

Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav, said in a statement that "the budget has been a let-down. It lacks a revival plan for the state which is in dire need of a special status and a special package".

The RJD leader, who is also a former Deputy CM, added, "The Centre must not insult the people of Bihar by presenting routine outlays as something out of the ordinary. We shall not retract, even by an inch, on the demand for special status which is required to eradicate backwardness of the state from where young people are forced to migrate in search of a better future."

CPI(ML) Liberation MLA Sandeep Saurav told PTI, "The Centre has cheated Bihar. The state needs nothing short of special category status for its overall growth. One-time financial assistance, which is too very small, will not serve the purpose.

Meanwhile, the Congress on Tuesday took a swipe at TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, saying he quit the NDA in 2018 due to the failure to grant special category status to the state and six years later when the government is reliant on his MPs, all he has managed to get is a "special financial support" for Amravati.

The YSR Congress has alleged that the Central government has given "zero" to Andhra Pradesh. In its official X account, the party said the Rs 15,000 crore funds for the capital Amaravati is nothing but a surety to be given by the Centre to get a loan. —*PTI*

### BIHAR

**Rs 60,000 cr** total outlay

**Rs 26,000 cr** for Patna-Purnea Expressway, Buxar-Bhagalpur Expressway, and Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Vaishali and Darbhanga road, and two-lane bridge over river Ganga at Buxar

**Rs 11,500 cr** for flood control & irrigation including Kosi-Mechi intra-state link

**Rs 21,400 cr** for 2,400 MW power plant at Pirpainti

- New airports, medical colleges and sports infra will be constructed
- Development of Rajgir, which holds religious significance for Hindus, Buddhists and Jains

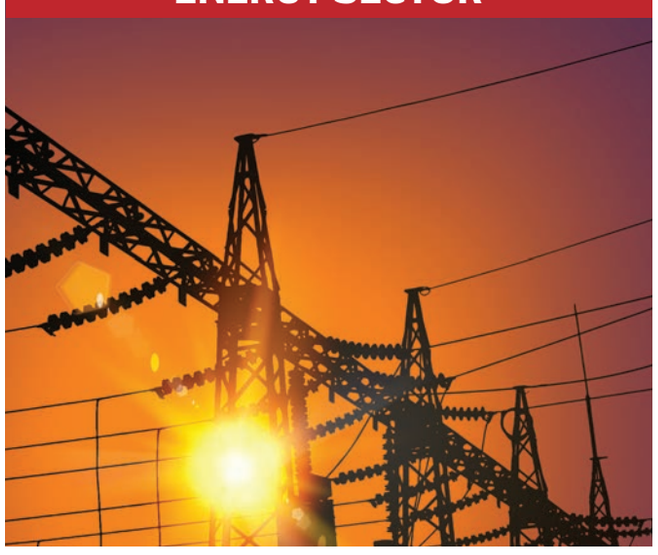
Polavaram irrigation project **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

Vishnupad Temple **PHOTO: X@INDEXBIHAR**

# Boost for energy sector, push for climate finance

## Rs 11,11,111 cr for infrastructure growth; spl allocations for flood-hit states

### ENERGY SECTOR



- Pumped Storage Policy: For electricity storage and facilitation of smooth integration of the growing share of renewable energy. It is a commonly used technology, in which water is pumped from a lower elevation reservoir to a higher elevation using low-cost surplus off-peak electric power to run the generators
- In nuclear power, investment in R&D of Bharat Small Modular Reactor and newer technologies
- A joint venture between NTPC and BHEL will set up a full scale 800 MW commercial plant

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Rs 11 lakh cr
for capital expenditure (3.4% of GDP)

- Aid for flood management and projects in Assam, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh
- Support for development of Nalanda as a tourist centre besides reviving Nalanda University

### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

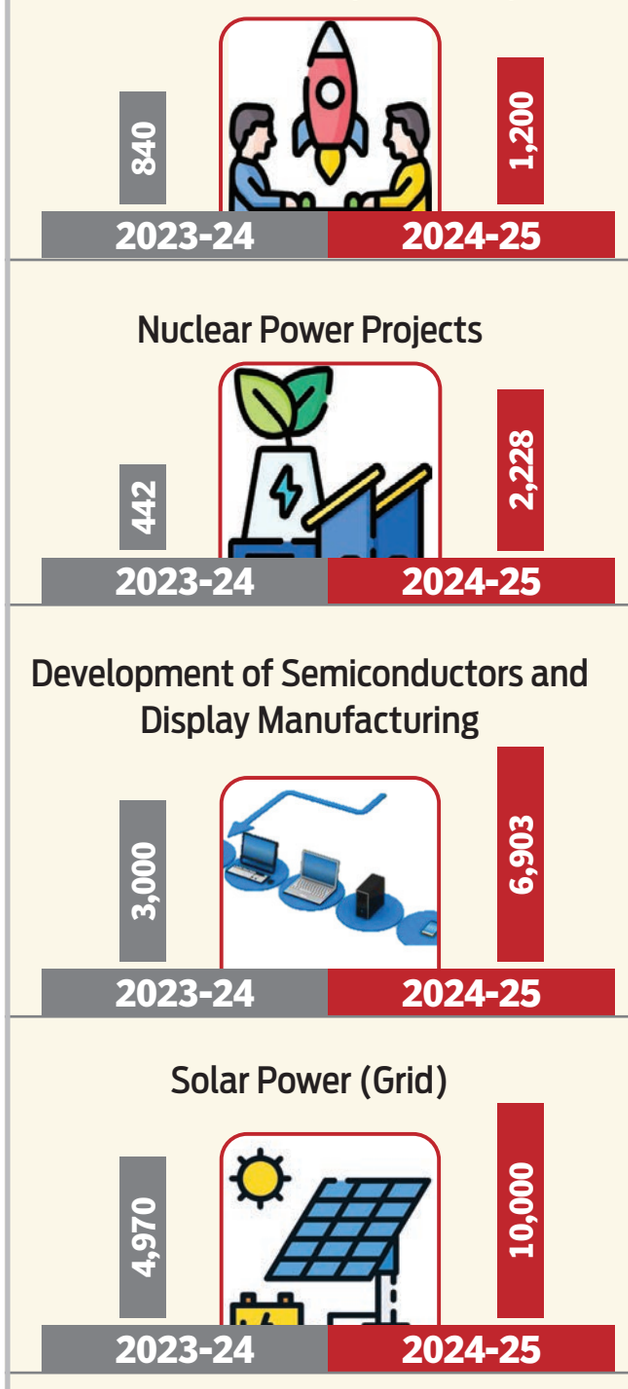
- To set up Anusandhan National Research Fund to support basic research
- Private sector-driven research and innovation at commercial scale with a financing pool of Rs 1 lakh crore

A venture capital fund of
Rs 1,000 cr
to expand space economy by five times in next 10 years

### NEXT GENERATION REFORMS

- To develop a taxonomy for climate finance to enhance availability of capital for climate adaptation and mitigation.
- NPS Vatsalya: A plan for contribution by parents and guardians for minors
- Land records in urban areas will be digitised with GIS mapping

### EXPENDITURE OF MAJOR ITEMS (IN ₹ CRORE)




### ALLOCATION FOR MINORITY AFFAIRS MINISTRY INCREASES BY RS 574 CRORE

The budgetary allocation for the Ministry of Minority Affairs has increased by Rs 574.31 crore to Rs 3,183.24 crore for 2024-25 as against the revised estimate of Rs 2,608.93 crore in 2023-24.

The budget allocation for the ministry was Rs 3,097.60 in 2023-24. However, the revised estimate was Rs 2,608.93, according to official documents.

The budget estimate for the Ministry of Minority Affairs this year is Rs 3,183.24.

### RUPEE COMES FROM...

| | |
|---|---|
| Non- debt capital receipts: 1% | Corporation tax: 17% |
| Customs: 4% | GST & other taxes: 18% |
| Union Excise Duties: 5% | Income tax: 19% |
| Non-Tax Receipts: 9% | Borrowing and Other Liabilities: 27% |

### HOW THE GOVT EARNS AND SPENDS EVERY RUPEE

### RUPEE GOES TO...

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Pensions: 4% | Other Expenditure: 9% | outlay on Defence and Subsidy): 16% |
| Subsidies: 6% | Finance Commission and other transfers: 9% | Interest payments: 19% |
| Centrally Sponsored Scheme: 8% | Central Sector Scheme (excluding capital | States' share of taxes and duties: 21% |
| Defence: 8% | | |

# Drinking water, sanitation get a mere 0.5% boost

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation has received a budgetary allocation of Rs 77,390.68 crores for the fiscal year 2024-2025.

This figure reflects a minimal increase of only 0.5 per cent from the revised estimate of Rs 77,032.65 crore announced in budget 2023-2024.

A substantial portion of this financial year's allotment for the Drinking Water and Sanitation department is directed towards the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), which received Rs 69,926.65 crore, a marginal rise from the revised estimate of Rs 69,846.31 crore in 2023-2024.

This flagship programme aims to provide functional household tap connections to every rural household by 2024, focusing on ensuring regular and adequate water supply.

Additionally, the Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS) has been allocated Rs 95 crore, a huge rise from the Rs 3 crore it got in the last revised estimate.

The Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), which focuses on maintaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status and enhancing waste management in rural areas, has been allocated Rs 7,192 crore.

- This allocation remains consistent with the budget for the previous fiscal year and continues to support sanitation efforts nationwide

This allocation remains consistent with the budget for the previous fiscal year and continues to support sanitation efforts nationwide.

The budget also includes significant funding for water supply and sanitation at Rs 64,302.85 crore, an increase from the previous year's Rs 64,138.41 crore.

For economic services, the budget includes Rs 35.78 crore for the Secretariat and capital outlay on general economic services. This is an increase from Rs 32.65 crore in the revised budget. —*PTI*

### ENERGY TRANSITION PLAN

# *Nuclear, pumped storage, thermal plants in focus*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

India's energy transition plan will focus on developing small modular nuclear reactors, pumped-storage projects and more efficient thermal plants, the government announced on Tuesday.

Presenting the 2024-25 Budget in the Lok Sabha, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the government will collaborate with private firms to develop small modular reactors (SMRs) and conduct research on advanced technologies to boost the share of nuclear power in India's energy mix.

Sitharaman also said a roadmap will be prepared to shift "hard to abate" industries, such as shipping, aviation, iron and steel, and chemicals, from focusing on energy-efficiency targets to emission targets.

To balance employment, growth and environmental sustainability, the government will release a policy document outlining appropriate energy-transition pathways. A taxonomy for climate finance will be developed to enhance the availability of capital for climate adaptation and mitigation, Sitharaman said.

SMRs are smaller, compact nuclear power plants (300 MWe or less) compared to current-generation base load plants (1,000 MWe or higher). These factory-fabricated reactors can be transported by trucks or rail to a nuclear power site and their output can be scaled by combining several units to achieve larger capacities.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran noted in the economic survey that the combined deployment of factory-manufactured, made-in-India SMRs, along with standardised 700-MWe pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs), could be an effective strategy for rapidly scaling up nuclear power capacity in India. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

## HC grants bail to 2 accused in MM Kalburgi murder

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday granted bail to two accused -- Vasudev Bhagwan Suryavanshi and Amit Baddi -- in the murder case of scholar MM Kalburgi. Justice MG Uma noted that the original theft case involving the two, who had been charged with stealing the two-wheeler used by the shooters in the murder, was resolved years ago. Moreover, only 10 out of 138 witnesses have been examined in the ongoing trial. The Court observed that the prosecution could not provide a definite timeline for the trial's conclusion. "Apart from the theft charges, there is no prima facie evidence indicating their involvement in the murder case." *—PTI*

## Shirur landslide: Toll rises to 8, search ops on

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

The body of a woman who went missing following a landslide in Shirur village in Uttara Kannada district was recovered from the Gangavalli river on Tuesday during search operation, taking the death toll to eight, police said. According to officials, the National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, Fire and Emergency Services and the Navy are continuing operations at the site and in the Gabgavalli river. The Indian Army Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief Team comprising an officer, two Junior commissioned officers and 55 others of Maratha Light Infantry Regiment, Belagavi, and one Junior commissioned officer and two others from College of Military Engineering, Pune, are also engaged in the exercise. Besides the rescue apparatus already in the field, the army team has specialised tools including ground penetration radars, deep search metal detectors, rafts with overboard motors and specialised climbing equipment, officials said.*—PTI*

## BJP to launch padayatra against MUDA scam

BENGALURU, 23 JULY

BJP has announced plans to undertake a padayatra on 29 July from the City to Mysuru to protest against alleged irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) and demand the resignation of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Following discussions in the Assembly session, BJP State leaders have resolved to march as a they are dissatisfied with the State government probing the MUDA scam. The main Opposition warned to continue with their padayatra if their demands are not met. The padayatra will be led by State BJP President BY Vijayendra, Opposition Leader R Ashoka, and senior party leaders. To maximize visibility and engage with the public, the BJP plans to route the padayatra through Channapatna and Mandya inner roads, avoiding the main Bengaluru-Mysuru highway. This move is aimed at drawing public attention to the alleged irregularities and intensifying pressure on the state government for accountability. *—Salar News*

# Cooperative Society Bill passed amid BJP walkout

## Assembly also passes Bill on cess on film tickets, OTT fees

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

The ruling Congress in Karnataka on Tuesday passed Karnataka Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill in Assembly despite Opposition BJP protesting and staging a walkout.

BJP had opposed the provision in the bill that empowers the State government to nominate three people as its representatives — of which one should be a person belonging to Schedule Caste or Schedule Tribe, one should be a woman and one from other categories — on the board of every assisted society. "The nominated people can vote in all meetings and elections of the cooperative society and can also contest in all the elections of the cooperative society. The ex-officio members and nominee from a financial or credit agency shall have voting rights but are not eligible to contest as office-bearers," the bill says.

BJP alleged that this provision was included so that the ruling party can have control over the cooperative societies by nominating its members. Cooperative Minister KN Rajanna and Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil dismissed the charge. The bill was passed earlier by the Assembly but could not be cleared by the council. As a result, it was returned to the Assembly again.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar makes a point during the Assembly session at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

**Two more bills get the nod**

The Assembly also passed an implementation of cess on film tickets and Over-the-Top (OTT) subscription fees and Karnataka Legislature (PreventionofDisqualification) (Second Amendment) Bill, 2024, on Tuesday.

The OTT subscription bill,

- The Legislature also passed Karnataka Legislature (Prevention of Disqualification) (Second Amendment) Bill, 2024

which will impose a surcharge ranging from 1 to 2 per cent, will be applied to cinema tickets, OTT services and related revenue-generating establishments in the State. The funds raised will create a dedicated fund to support social security and welfare schemes for artists, including actors, musicians, dancers, theatrical plays and those in technical and manual roles within the industry.

The Legislature also passed Karnataka Legislature (PreventionofDisqualification) (Second Amendment) Bill, 2024. This bill amends existing regulations to exempt specific high-ranking positions from disqualification under Karnataka's legislative laws. *—PTI*

# Industry bodies in State hail Union Budget

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

The Bangalore Chamber of Industry and Commerce (BCIC) on Tuesday lauded the Union Budget 2024-25 as a comprehensive and forward-looking roadmap for India's economic growth.

BCIC expressed its satisfaction with the government's proactive stance on several key areas, including Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) development, job creation, ease of doing business, and tax reforms. "Government's commitment to nine key priority areas, coupled with the assurance of continuity, provides a robust framework for sustained growth," BCIC President S Devarajan said. The substantial allocation of Rs 11.11 lakh crore for capital expenditure is a significant boost to the economy, with potential to drive growth in sectors such as cement and steel while generating ample employment opportunities.

"Bengaluru, as a startup hub, benefits significantly from the abolition of Angel Tax and Equalisation Levy," he added.

The Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI) also welcomed the union budget which, it said, is focused on bringing a balance between reforms and populism.

"FKCCI welcomes the efforts towards boosting employment opportunities by giving wage benefits for first time workers through EPFO, additional thrust to skilling, industrial training on hub and spoke model, and additional support for loans up to Rs 10 lakh for Higher Education," it said.

"We are happy to note that Mudra loans limit extension to Rs 20 lakh would help small proprietary businesses and partnership firms. Karnataka Small Scale Industries Association President, MG Rajagopal too hailed the Union Budget 2024-25 as a pronounced policy vision statement that will encourage and empower the MSMEs visibly. *—PTI*

# ED wants to implicate me illegally in Valmiki scam: CM

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday accused the Centre of using the central agencies to destabilise Congress government by implicating him illegally in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation scam.

Siddaramaiah made the allegations during an agitation by Congress legislators near the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the Vidhana Soudha premises against the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) alleged highhandedness while probing Rs 187 crore irregularities in the Valmiki Corporation.

The ED summoned Additional Director of Social Welfare Department B Kallesh for investigation and put pressure on him to give in writing that the chief minister was involved in this scam, Siddaramaiah claimed. Meanwhile, Congress, including Siddaramaiah and Home Minister G Parameshwara, held a protest at the Gandhi statue outside Vidhan Soudha.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah protests against ED and Central government in Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru on Tuesday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

**Karnataka HC stays FIR against 2 ED officials**

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday stayed the FIR against two Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials investigating the multi-crore scam at the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd.

Justice M Nagaprasanna ordered the stay, citing potential abuse of law against the officers performing their duties. The officials were charged by the Bengaluru police based on a complaint from Additional Director of the Karnataka Social Welfare Department, Kallesh B, who alleged coercion, during his questioning by the ED, to implicate former Minister B Nagendra and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in connection with the alleged financial irregularities at the state-run Corporation.

Additional Solicitor General Aravind Kamat, representing the ED, argued that the officers were booked while executing their official duties.

Justice Nagaprasanna emphasised that allowing such investigations could deter officers from performing their duties, likening the situation to "innovative filmy style ideas" and warning against opening a "Pandora's Box."

The court also ordered the issue of notice to the state government and other respondents on a petition filed by Union Bank of India seeking a direction to the government to transfer to CBI the probe being carried out against it by the state-constituted SIT in connection with the alleged financial irregularities in a state-run corporation. *—PTI*

**FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHT**

Members of Karnataka State Gram Panchayat Employees Association demand a fixed minimum salary of Rs 31,000 during their protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Tuesday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

## Landslides: Army extends aid to search operations

**UTTARA KANNADA, 23 JULY**

In response to the severe weather conditions and subsequent landslides in the Uttar Kannada district, the Indian Army has deployed its forces to assist in rescue operations.

The region has been experiencing continuous heavy rains for the past two weeks, leading to multiple landslides, particularly affecting National Highway 66. On 16 July, a major landslide struck Shirur Village in Ankola Taluk, trapping several individuals travelling through the area. In an immediate response, the Indian Army mobilised two Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) teams from the Maratha Light Infantry Regimental Centre (MLIRC) on 21 July

The State government has been coordinating closely with the Indian Army, providvving necessary equipment and logistical support to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations.

The rescue mission is expected to continue for another seven days, during which the Army personnel will work tirelessly to locate and extricate trapped individuals, providing immediate medical assistance and relief. *—ANI*

## Man held for stabbing priest to death in Dharwad

**DHARWAD, 23 JULY**

A man was arrested for allegedly stabbing a priest to death on 21 July in the Hubballi-Dharwad City, the police said on Tuesday.

The murder case of the Vaishno Devi temple priest, Devendrappa Mahadevappa Vanahalli, 63, was solved after the accused was arrested on Monday night.

The Hubballi-Dharwad Police on Monday night nabbed the accused Santosh Tippanna Bhojgar, 44, a resident of G Adda in the Kamaripet police station limits. The Police Commissioner N Shashi Kumar revealed that the accused killed Devendrappa on suspicion that the priest had performed religious rituals on his family, leading to disturbing incidents.

In recent years, the accused's three brothers and father had died, and his mother had suffered paralysis. Bhojgar believed that these events were consequences of the deceased priest's rituals, who conducted them at the request of Bhojgar's relatives.

Bhojgar had previously attempted to kill the priest in 2022 by stabbing him, but Devendrappa had survived the attack.

Despite their best efforts, the Vidyanagar police failed to identify or apprehend the accused at that time.

Since then, the accused had been keeping a close watch on the priest's movements, waiting for an opportunity to strike again. *—ANI*

## Blaze on merchant ship off Karwar coast extinguished

**PANAJI, 23 JULY**

A major fire that broke out on 19 July on a merchant navy ship off the Karwar coast has been doused and efforts are underway to ensure the affected vessel remains in deep sea considering the grave threat posed to the coastline, the Coast Guard said on Tuesday.

"The vessel is presently 13 nautical miles west of New Mangalore and heading towards open sea," the ICG stated in a release.

MV Maersk Frankfurt, carrying 1,154 containers, including some with dangerous cargo like benzene and sodium cyanate, had caught fire some 102 nautical miles off the coast of Goa. *—PTI*

## BJP wants Guv to distribute funds to Kalyana K'taka MLAs

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

A BJP delegation on Tuesday submitted a memorandum to Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot urging his intervention to ensure equitable distribution of funds for the development of districts in the Kalyana Karnataka region among the opposition party MLAs.

They alleged that the majority of the funds were going to the MLAs of the ruling Congress.

The memorandum noted that the Karnataka Chief Minister had announced a grant of Rs 5,000 crore for the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB), in the budget for the year 2024-25. At present, the distribution is as follows- Chief Minister: five per cent, Chairman of the Board: three per cent, Planning Manager: three per cent and Six District In-charge Ministers: Five per cent each, the party claimed.

"Out of the Rs 5,000 crore grant, as per allocation in the budget for the development of Kalyana Karnataka districts, nearly Rs 2,000 crore is being distributed as above, while the majority of remaining Rs 3,000 crore grant is going to all Congress MLAs denying BJP and JD(S) MLAs of equitable distribution, thereby resulting in the stagnation of development of Kalyana Karnataka districts," it alleged.

It also mentioned that both BJP and JD(S) MLAs are not on the board of KKRDB. *—PTI*

DK Shivakumar
*PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

## Irregularities in Krishna Corp will be probed: DKS

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

Deputy Chief Minisiter DK Shivakumar on Tuesday informed that the State government will establish a Rapid Investigation Team to examine irregularities within the Krishna Bhagya Jala Nigam Limited, which has been accused of misconduct in the distribution of compensation.

In response to MLA Basanagowda Patil Yatnal's concerns, Shivakumar disclosed that compensation mandated for acquisition cases have created financial difficulties. He highlighted that compensations ranging from Rs 74 lakh to Rs 1.26 crore per acre have been awarded for suburban land in Vijayapur, Bagalkot, and Raichur, with some court orders reaching Rs 5.18 crore per acre for resettlement. He said that government lawyers handling land acquisition cases will be withdrawn, and an appeal will be filed in the High Court. This decision follows a previous cabinet sub-committee resolution under Basavaraja Bommai's tenure to offer Rs 25 lakh per acre in compensation, which the court later ruled should be doubled. *—SALAR NEWS*

**DISREPUTE TO DEPT**

# *No insta reels while in uniform, City Top Cop warns police*

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

**BENGALURU, 23 JULY**

The City Police Commissioner B Dayananda on Tuesday warned police officers and personnel from making reels and uploading them on social media while in uniform and on duty, as it would bring disrepute to the department.

His statement came a day after a circular was issued by the Office of the Commissioner, in which he said that creating reels in uniform not only amounted to indiscipline, but is also against the rules of the department.

As police are also part of society, it's natural that societal flaws are also found in them, he said. In recent days, police officials and staff have developed a habit of creating reels, shorts and videos while in uniform and posting them on social media. It does not bring good repute to the department, he asserted.

Stating that the "uniform has its own respect in the society", the commissioner said, "Showcasing your 'artistic talent' while in uniform is against the rules." He said that the police uniform is a symbol of commitment, dedication and responsibility of the police. Accordingly, its use in any public or digital forum should reflect these values.

- Police Commissioner B Dayananda said that creating reels in uniform is also against the rules of the department

Social media plays an important role in shaping public opinion and any inappropriate content by police in uniform can affect public confidence in the department, he pointed out. He directed all the divisional deputy commissioners of police, unit heads and supervisory officers to sensitise their colleagues and subordinates and take strict action in case of non-compliance.

The social media unit of the Bengaluru police has also been asked to keep vigil and monitor such activities of police personnel on social media, and report the matter to seniors for further action. *—PTI*

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose PHOTO: PTI

## Bengal Guv seeks report from CM on B'desh comment

KOLKATA, 23 JULY

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose sought a report from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on her comment that she would offer "shelter" to helpless people from violence-hit Bangladesh, the Raj Bhavan said. In a post on X, the Raj Bhavan Media Cell said it is the Centre's prerogative to handle anything that is part of external affairs. "The matter of accommodating people coming in from a foreign country lies in the domain of the Union government. Public statement by a chief minister undertaking the responsibility to provide shelter to people who may be coming in from a foreign nation implies Constitutional transgression of a very serious nature," it said on Monday. The post on X was attributed to an officer on special duty, and ended with a "disclaimer". —*PTI*

# 'Kursi bachao Budget' vs 'PM's dream Budget'

## Cong calls it copy-paste job of its manifesto

Congress slammed the Budget as being more focused on posturing than action PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 23 JULY

Opposition on Tuesday termed the Union Budget as a "kursi bachao budget" driven by political compulsions and claimed that it ignored Opposition-ruled states in a bid to "appease" BJP's allies.

Congress slammed the Budget as being "more focused on posturing than action" and claimed that the "copy-paste government" borrowed heavily from the party's manifesto for Lok Sabha polls.

The attack by opposition parties came after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the budget in Lok Sabha.

Sitharaman announced income tax relief for the middle class, Rs 2 lakh crore outlay for job creation schemes over the next five years and a spending splurge for states-run by her party's new coalition partners. Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi dubbed the Union Budget a "kursi bachao budget".

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge termed the budget "copycat" and alleged that it is not for the progress of the country but to "save the Modi government".

"Only superficial talks have been held for farmers. This government has no intention of increasing rural wages," Kharge said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Priyanka Chaturvedi termed the budget "Pradhan Mantri Sarkar Bachao Yojana".

—*PTI*

## BJP says it will accelerate economic growth

BJP says this Budget will go a long way in making India a five trillion dollar economy by 2027 PHOTO: ANI

PATNA, 23 JULY

BJP on Tuesday hailed the Union Budget as "outstanding" and said it will accelerate the country's economic transformation and help realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of making India developed.

After the Union Budget was presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said it is unique in many ways and by clearly outlining the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government's nine key priorities for all-round and inclusive development, it has successfully elevated India's growth trajectory.

"This Budget will go a long way in making India a five trillion dollar economy by 2027," Singh said in a post on X.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the budget is "growth-oriented" and meant to benefit "everyone, especially youngsters and women", as he hit out at opposition parties for picking holes in it.

Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia hailed the budget as "farsighted" and said it has ensured that India marches on the path to become a developed and self-reliant country.

"I want to congratulate the finance minister. India will march on the path of progress under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Scindia told reporters. —*PTI*

# Bihar Oppn protests over denial of special status

PATNA, 23 JULY

Bihar assembly was adjourned twice on Tuesday as opposition members stood in the well of the House and tried to upturn furniture, raising slogans against the Centre's refusal to grant special status to the state.

Members of RJD, Congress and the Left had reached the House, carrying placards with slogans like "shame on anti-Bihar BJP". Adding a dash of humour, a few of them also held rattles meant for children to underscore that the Centre, after having denied the state its due, was offering a "jhunjhuna" by speaking of special package and other types of help.

Inside the House, they were repeatedly asked by Speaker Nand Kishor Yadav to take their seats, who noted with distress that school children had come to watch the proceedings and the commotion was leaving an unfavourable impression on their minds.

**'No' to special status revokes cryptic response**

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar came out with a cryptic response to the Centre's refusal to grant special category status to the state.

Nitish Kumar PHOTO: PTI

- Members of RJD, Congress and the Left had reached the House, carrying placards with slogans like "shame on anti-Bihar BJP

"You will get to know all things slowly, and slowly (sab kuchh dhire dhire jaan jaaiyega)," the longest-serving CM of the state said, in reply to a volley of questions he faced from journalists

—*PTI*

**Budget will help state become 'aatmanirbhar'**

Janata Dal (United) welcomed a host of Bihar-specific announcements in the Union Budget, asserting that these development measures will be a big step in making the state "aatmanirbhar".

Party spokesperson KC Tyagi lauded what he said was "special financial assistance" for Bihar by way of budgetary allocations of over Rs 26,000 crore for highways and Rs 11,500 crore for steps to mitigate floods.

# 'Budget ignored FARMERS'

CHANDIGARH, 23 JULY

Farmers in Punjab on Tuesday claimed that the Union Budget, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman "ignored" the farming sector and also remained silent on giving legal guarantee to minimum support price (MSP).

Sitharaman on Tuesday announced a Rs 1.52 lakh crore allocation for the agriculture and allied sectors in 2024-25, outlining a comprehensive plan to boost research, promote sustainable farming, enhance oilseed and pulse production and integrate technology in the agricultural landscape.

In her Budget speech, Sitharaman emphasised the need for a thorough review of the agriculture research setup to enhance productivity and develop climate-resilient crop varieties.

However, Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) leader Sarwan Singh Pandher, while reacting to the Budget, claimed that the farming sector has been 'ignored' in the Budget.

SKM (Non-Political) and KMM are spearheading the 'Delhi Chalo' march by farmers. —*PTI*

"I am glad to know that the Hon'ble FM has read the Congress Manifesto LS 2024 after the election results. I am happy she has virtually adopted the Employment-linked incentive (ELI) outlined on page 30 of Congress Manifesto.

-P Chidambaram, Senior Congress leader

Can India be developed without developing Uttar Pradesh? This is a disappointing budget. You cannot give employment by just giving internship. Will reservation be given for these short-term employment initiatives?

-Akhilesh Yadav, Samajwadi Party President

Bengal has been completely deprived in this Union budget. This doesn't look into the interest of the poor. The budget is politically biased. This is directionless and has no vision. It is only to serve a political mission. I don't see any light

-Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal Chief Minister

Once BJP opened its account in Kerala, they closed the account of the state," he said, expressing extreme dissatisfaction and disappointment with the Union budget.

-KN Balagopal, Kerala Finance Minister

It is true that Tamil Nadu has been betrayed. Though the Centre has been lavish in allocating funds to several states, it has not accepted the demands of our Chief Minister. It is a big disappointement

-Thangam Thennarasu, Tamil Nadu Finance Minister

## Rajasthan: Train mishap averted after rods on tracks

JAIPUR, 23 JULY

A potential train accident was averted in Dungarpur district of Rajasthan after a loco pilot spotted iron rods on the track, officials said on Tuesday. The incident took place on Sunday night shortly after the Asarva-Jaipur Express train left Dungarpur station. The train departed at around 11pm after four km, the loco pilot spotted the rods on the track and applied brakes. The train stopped just before the rods, they said. Deputy Superintendent of Police Dungarpur Rajkumar Rajora said a case has been registered against unidentified people and the matter is being investigated. He said there were six iron rods on the track. —*PTI*

## 6 Russians detained by Kudankulam police on suspicion

TIRUNELVELI, 23 JULY

Six Russians besides three others who were moving around close to the Kudankulam nuclear reactor area here were detained by the police on suspicion, a senior official said on Tuesday. The Russians, which included a woman, accompanied by two persons from Valliyoor and a car driver from Thiruvananthapuram in neighbouring Kerala were picked up by the Kudankulam police Kudankulam has two 1,000 MWe nuclear reactors built with Russian and four more similar units are coming up at same complex. —*PTI*

# India sees 280% surge in wildlife sanctuaries, national park projects

NEW DELHI, 23 JULY

India saw a massive 280 per cent increase in the number of projects recommended in wildlife sanctuaries and national parks in 2023-24 as compared to 2022-23, according to the data presented in Parliament.

Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh also informed the Lok Sabha that a total of 957.25 square kilometers or 95,724.99 hectares of forest area has been diverted for non-forestry use under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 over five years starting from April 2019.

The minister said that 71 project proposals were approved in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries across the country in 2019-20. The numbers stood at 85 in 2020-21, 154 in 2021-22, 150 in 2022-23, and surged to 421 in 2023-24.

71 project proposals were approved across the country PHOTO: PTI

Madhya Pradesh saw the highest forest area diversion for non-forestry use during this period, with 22,614.74 hectares. This was followed by Odisha with 13,621.95 hectares, Arunachal Pradesh with 8,744.78 hectares, Gujarat with 7,402.97 hectares, and Uttar Pradesh with 6,184.64 hectares. The government data also showed that 179 mining proposals were approved, resulting in the diversion of a total of 18,922.98 hectares of forest land during this period.

In comparison, compensatory afforestation was carried out on 35,718.16 hectares in 2019-20, 36,000.59 hectares in 2020-21, 42,151.06 hectares in 2021-22, and 39,263.19 hectares in 2022-23. —*PTI*

## 511 animals died in Assam floods

GUWAHATI, 23 JULY

A total of 847 wild animals were affected by floods in Assam in the past five years, out of which 511 animals were reported as dead.

Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh said that 511 animals were reported as casualties in the floods in Assam over the past five years.

"As per the information received from the State Government of Assam, a total of 847 wild animals were affected by floods in the state of Assam during the last five years, out of which 336 animals were rescued successfully and 511 animals were casualties," he said. —*ANI*

IIT-D EXPERTS' VERDICT

# Only one correct answer in NEET UG physics exam

NEW DELHI, 23 JULY

A panel of three experts of IIT Delhi has told the Supreme Court that there was only one right answer and not two to a controversial physics question that was asked in the NEET-UG 2024 examination.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice JB Pardiwala on Monday had asked the Director, IIT-Delhi to set up a team of three experts for going into the particular question of physics and submit a report on the correct answer by Tuesday noon.

At the outset, the CJI referred to the contents of the report, and said, "We have received the IIT Delhi report. The IIT Director Rangan Banerjee...constituted a committee from the department of physics. They say that the option four is the correct answer." CJI further said the option four, which says the "Statement I is correct but Statement II is incorrect' is correct".

"The committee has opined clearly that there was only one option which is option four (4). So the National Testing Agency (NTA) was correct in its answer key which was option four (4)," the bench said.

The hearing is underway and presently, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and the NTA, is arguing. —*PTI*

## Jawan killed as Army foils infiltration bid in J&K Poonch

JAMMU, 23 JULY

A soldier was killed as the Army thwarted an infiltration bid along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district early Tuesday, officials said.

"Alert troops foiled an infiltration bid by effectively engaging infiltrating terrorists with effective fire in the Battal sector at 0300 hours," White Knight Corps said on X.

"During the exchange of heavy fire, one braveheart has been injured. Operations are continuing," the Corps said.

According to sources, a group of armed terrorists tried to enter into Battal forward area of the Krishnagati belt but alert troops picked up their movement and immediately took action.

Lance Naik Subash Kumar was injured in the intense gunfight and later succumbed, they said, adding terrorists too suffered "loss." The post-mortem has been conducted and the soldier's body handed over to the Army, a police officer said. —*PTI*

## SL Navy apprehends 9 TN fishermen, seizes 2 boats

RAMESWARAM, 23 JULY

Sri Lankan Navy apprehended nine fishermen hailing from Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram on Monday, as per the Rameswaram Fishermen Association.

Sri Lankan Navy seized two powerboats, claiming they were fishing across the border.

According to the fishermen's association, 535 boats went to sea for fishing on Monday.

They said the Navy apprehended the fishermen while fishing near Thalaimannar in the Gulf of Mannar region.

The protesters also demanded the release of 170 steamboats and country boats seized by the Lankan Navy. From 2018 to 2024, the Sri Lankan Navy seized a total of 170 steamboats and country boats belonging to the fishermen of Tamil Nadu.

The fisherfolk demanded appropriate compensation from the central government as well as the Tamil Nadu for any damage to the barges and country boats. —*ANI*

## 'Illegal' house of Rajasthan paper leak accused demolished in Churu

JAIPUR, 23 JULY

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

An alleged illegally constructed house of an accused in the Rajasthan sub-inspector recruitment exam paper leak case was demolished by authorities in Churu district, officials said on Tuesday. The action was taken on Monday night by the Churu Municipal Council amid tight security arrangements, they said. "The construction was done illegally by Vivek Bhambhu, an accused arrested in the SI paper leak case. It was demolished on Monday," DSP Sunil Kumar said. —*PTI*

# Women in Sudan forced to trade sex for food

**KHARTOUM, 23 JULY**

In Sudan's war-ravaged city of Omdurman, women are being compelled to have sex with soldiers in exchange for food, according to the Guardian, citing accounts from more than two dozen women.

The women who spoke to the outlet described harrowing instances where sexual intercourse with members of the Sudanese army is the only means to obtain food or sellable goods to support their families. The assaults predominantly occur in the city's "factories area", where the most food is available.

One victim, responsible for her elderly parents and 18-year-old daughter, stated: "Both of my parents are too old and sick and I never let my daughter go out to look for food... I went to the soldiers and that was the only way to get food – they were everywhere in the factories area."

She recounted being forced to have sex with soldiers at a meat-processing factory last May and again at a warehouse storing fava beans in January. Before the conflict, she worked as a maid but lacked the resources to flee the city when war broke out between the army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

The UN reports that the Sudanese conflict has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and displaced over 10 million people, with nearly 26 million facing "acute food insecurity." Reports of rape by armed men emerged soon after the conflict started on 15 April 2023, with numerous accounts of systematic sexual violence by RSF fighters in Khartoum and Darfur. Despite the UN's World Food Programme making deliveries to the Khartoum area, women reported seeing no international aid in their neighbourhoods.

*—Middle East Monitor*

The assaults occur in the city's factories area ***PHOTO: X/@SuppressedNws***

***PHOTO: X/ @GEORGE_KURTZ***

## CrowdStrike CEO called to testify before US Congress

**WASHINGTON, 23 JULY**

US House leaders are calling on CrowdStrike CEO George Kurtz to testify before Congress about the cybersecurity company's role in sparking the widespread tech outage that grounded flights, knocked banks and hospital systems offline and affected services around the world. CrowdStrike said this week a "significant number" of the millions of computers that crashed on Friday, causing global disruptions, are back in operation as its customers and regulators await a more detailed explanation of what went wrong. Republicans who lead the House Homeland Security committee said Monday they want those answers soon. "While we appreciate CrowdStrike's response and coordination with stakeholders, we cannot ignore the magnitude of this incident, which some have claimed is the largest IT outage in history," said a letter to Kurtz. ***—AP***

## Tesla to use humanoid robots in 2026, says Musk

**NEW YORK, 23 JULY**

Tesla boss Elon Musk said that the electric car maker will start producing and using humanoid robots from 2026. Musk had previously said that he expected the robot, called Optimus, to be ready for use in Tesla factories by the end of 2024. Other firms, including Honda and Boston Dynamics, have also been developing their own humanoid robots. It came just a day before Tesla was due to release its latest financial results. The company's shares ended Monday's trading session in New York up by more than 5 per cent. Musk has previously said Tesla aimed for the robots to be mass produced and cost less than $20,000 each. In 2019, he said he felt "very confident" Tesla would have self-driving taxis on the road by the following year. ***—BBC News***

## Imran Khan seeks 'int'l standards' jail amenities

**ISLAMABAD, 23 JULY**

Jailed Pakistan former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi has moved a top court here to get jail amenities in line with international standards for him and his wife, according to a media report on Tuesday. Geo News reported that Khan and Bibi filed the petition at Islamabad High Court on Monday to seek "high-quality facilities" at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail where they are lodged. The 71-year-old, who was ousted from his office via a no-confidence motion in 2022, has been in prison for more than a year after his arrest in various cases, including the Toshakhana, cipher, and the un-Islamic marriage cases. ***—PTI***

## Taiwan cancels drills as typhoon Gaemi approaches

**TAIPEI, 23 JULY**

An approaching typhoon prompted the cancellation of air force drills off Taiwan's east coast on Tuesday, although naval and land exercises were set to continue in other parts of the self-governing island democracy, which China threatens to invade. The Air Force 5th Tactical Mixed Wing announced the cancellation, citing adverse weather conditions. According to the Central Weather Bureau, Typhoon Gaemi was heading westward toward the island with sustained winds of 144 kmph and gusts of up to 180 kmph. Ferries and some domestic flights were cancelled on Tuesday. Military spokesperson Sun Li-fang said the annual Han Kuang military exercises are on track to continue with adjustments to ensure the safety of personnel and equipment. ***—AP***

# Ethiopia landslides kill at least 157

## Kids, pregnant women are among the victims

**ADDIS ABABA, 23 JULY**

At least 157 people were killed in mudslides in a remote part of Ethiopia that has been hit with heavy rainfall, many of them as they tried to rescue survivors of an earlier mudslide, local authorities said Tuesday.

Young children and pregnant women were among the victims of the mudslides in the Kencho Shacha Gozdi district of southern Ethiopia, said Dagmawi Ayele, a local administrator.

The death toll rose from 55 late Monday to 157 on Tuesday as search operations continued in the area, said Kassahun Abayneh, head of the Gofa Zone communications office. Gofa Zone is the administrative area where the mudslides occurred.

Most of the victims were buried in a mudslide on Monday morning as rescue workers searched the steep terrain for survivors of another mudslide the previous day. At least five people have been pulled alive from the mud, Ayele said.

Hundreds of people gather at the site of two landslides in Ethiopia as the search continues for the missing ***PHOTO: FB/ GOFA ZONEGOVERNMENT***

Another official in Gofa, Markos Melese, said many people remained unaccounted for among the group that was covered by mud while trying to rescue others. "We are still searching for the missing," said Melese, director of the disaster response agency in Gofa Zone.

"There are children who are hugging corpses, having lost their entire family, including mother, father, brother and sister, due to the accident," he said. Landslides are common during Ethiopia's rainy reason, which started in July and is expected to last until mid-September.

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in May that "floods impacted over 19,000 people in several zones, displacing over a thousand and causing damage to livelihoods and infrastructure". *—AP/Al Jazeera*

## Hasina blames political foes for violence in B'desh

**DHAKA, 23 JULY**

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has blamed her political opponents for the deadly unrest in the country, adding she was "forced" to impose a curfew for public safety.

"I never wanted it," she said on Monday in a meeting with business leaders in the capital Dhaka. "We will lift the curfew whenever the situation gets better."

Her comments come a day after Bangladesh's top court scrapped most of the quotas on government jobs, which have sparked weeks of violent clashes across the country.

More than 150 people have been killed in clashes between protesters and the police and the rallies have escalated into calls for Hasina to step down.

Hasina has blamed the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami and their student wings for the violence,

Sheikh Hasina ***PHOTO: X/@STAYWITHHASINA***

saying her government will work to "suppress these militants and create a better environment".

Political analysts see the unrest as an unprecedented test for one of Asia's most powerful women. "Unfortunately, she never became the prime minister for everyone in the country. Instead, she remained the leader of just one group," he said.

About 500 people have also been arrested in the past two weeks, which saw authorities calling in the military and imposing a nationwide curfew. *—BBC News*

## Hamas, Fatah join hands in ending years-long rift

**RAMALLAH, 23 JULY**

Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah signed a declaration in Beijing on ending a years-long rift, Chinese state media said Tuesday, taking a step toward potentially resolving the deep divide between the sides as the war in Gaza rages on.

The two rival Palestinian groups, along with 12 other political factions, met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, concluding talks that started Sunday, according to a post on social media platform Weibo from Chinese TV network CGTN. The declaration is the result of the latest in a series of talks meant to unite the sides. Previous declarations have failed, casting doubt over whether the China-sponsored negotiations might actually lead to a resolution. It comes as Israel, Hamas are weighing an internationally backed proposal. *—PTI*

**US ELECTION**

# Kamala Harris wins enough support to seal nomination

**WASHINGTON, 23 JULY**

Vice-President Kamala Harris has attracted the support of enough Democratic delegates to become the party's nominee for President.

A survey by the Associated Press on Monday evening said Ms Harris had received the endorsement of more than the 1,976 delegates needed to win the nomination in the first round of voting. Harris said she was "proud" to have secured "broad support" and looked forward to formally accepting the nomination.

Delegates are people who are selected to represent their electoral area at the Democratic National Convention, the party's key nominating event. Such endorsements are non-binding, but if the total holds between now and when delegates cast their votes, scheduled to take place from 1-7 August, Ms Harris would formally clinch the party's nomination.

> **We're not up against a candidate. We're up against a machine**
>
> Vivek Ramaswamy, Indian-American politician

Harris' campaign has raised USD 81 million in the first 24-hour period since incumbent President Joe Biden stepped aside from the presidential race and endorsed his deputy as the Democratic Party's new nominee. *—BBC News/ AP*

An undated photo of Vice-President Kamala Harris and US President Joe Biden ***PHOTO: PTI***

Kimberly Cheatle ***PHOTO: PTI***

## Trump shooting: secret service Director resigns

**WASHINGTON, 23 JULY**

The Director of the Secret Service is stepping down from her job, according to an email she sent to staff, following the assassination attempt against former president Donald Trump that unleashed intensifying outcry about how the agency tasked with protecting current and former presidents could fail in its core mission.

Kimberly Cheatle, who had served as Secret Service director since August 2022, had been facing growing calls to resign and several investigations into how the shooter was able to get so close to the Republican presidential nominee at an outdoor campaign rally in Pennsylvania.

"I take full responsibility for the security lapse," she said in the email to staff Tuesday. "In light of recent events, it is with a heavy heart that I have made the difficult decision to step down as your director."

Cheatle's resignation comes a day after appeared before a congressional committee and was berated by hours by both Democrats and Republicans for the security failures. She called the attempt on Trump's life the Secret Service's "most significant operational failure" in decades and said she takes fully responsibility for the security lapses, but angered lawmakers by failing to answer specific questions about the investigation. *—AP*

## Trump's lawyers urge to repeal civil fraud verdict

**NEW YORK, 23 JULY**

Fresh off victories in other legal cases, Donald Trump on Monday pressed a New York appeals court to overturn the nearly USD 500 million New York civil fraud judgment that threatens to drain his personal cash reserves as he campaigns to retake the White House.

In paperwork filed with the state's mid-level appeals court, the former president's lawyers said Manhattan Judge Arthur Engoron's 16 February finding that Trump lied to banks, insurers and others about his wealth was "erroneous" and "egregious."

His lawyers argued that New York Attorney General Letitia James' lawsuit should have been promptly dismissed, the statute of limitations barred some allegations, that no one was harmed by Trump's alleged fraud and that James' involvement in private business transactions threatens to drive business out of the state. Trump's lawyers contend that Engoron's decision, if upheld, would bestow James, a Democrat, with "limitless power to target anyone she desires, including her self-described political opponents." *—AP*

# At least 26 villagers killed in Central Mali attack

**BAMAKO, 23 JULY**

At least 26 people were killed after an armed group attacked a village in Mali's central region, near the border with Burkina Faso, a government official said Monday, the latest violent attack in the conflict-hit region.

The assailants attacked villagers as most of them worked in their farmlands in the Dembo village on Sunday evening, said Moulaye Guindo, the mayor of Bankass town where Dembo is located. Such attacks are becoming increasingly frequent in central Mali. No group has claimed responsibility for Sunday's attack, but the blame quickly fell on JNIM, an extremist group linked to al-Qaida that often targets villagers in the region in a similar manner, including in July when rebels attacked a wedding ceremony and killed at least 21 people. *—AP*

The attack took place in Dembo village ***PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE***

## OPERATION OUTSTRETCHED ARM: HOUTHIS CELEBRATE STRIKE AS YEMENIS SUFFER

**HODEIDAH, 23 JULY**

A media report presented various interpretations of the recent escalation between Israel and the Houthis in Yemen following the Houthis UAV attack on Israel. The subsequent "Operation Outstretched Arm," has led to the bombing of the port of Hodeidah in Yemen. According to media reports, Iran, which supports the Houthis, has an interest in "complicating Yemen." Former Houthi spokesman Ali Al Bukhaiti was quoted saying, "For the first time since the organisation was established 20 years ago, the Houthis have killed an Israeli." He also said Houthis have caused the death of over half a million Yemenis since their coup.

*—Courtesy, Jerusalem Post*

## UN says nearly 40 million people had HIV in 2023

**UNITED NATIONS, 23 JULY**

Nearly 40 million people were living with the HIV virus that causes AIDS in 2023, over 9 million weren't getting any treatment, and the result was that every minute someone died of AIDS-related causes, the UN said in a new report launched Monday. The report said progress has slowed, funding is shrinking, and new infections are rising in three regions: the Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America.

In 2023, around 6,30,000 people died from AIDS-related illnesses, a significant decline from the 2.1 million deaths in 2004. But the latest figure is more than double the target for

***PHOTO: PTI***

2025 of fewer than 2,50,000 deaths, according to the report by UNAIDS.

UNAIDS Executive Director Winnie Byanyima said: "World leaders pledged to end the AIDS pandemic as a public health threat by 2030, and they can uphold their promise, but only if they ensure that the HIV response has the resources it needs, and that the human rights of everyone are protected." *—PTI*

**DEFACED WITH GRAFFITI**

# *BAPS Hindu temple vandalised in Canada*

**OTTAWA, 23 JULY**

A BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir in the Canadian city of Edmonton has been vandalised with alleged hateful and anti-India graffiti, amidst rising Hinduphobia in the country.

The Consulate General of India in Vancouver said in a post on X: "We condemn the defacing of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in #Edmonton with anti-India graffiti. We have requested the Canadian authorities to investigate the incident and take prompt action against the perpetrators."

There has been no reaction as yet from the BAPS – the

There has been no reaction as yet from the BAPS ***PHOTO: X/@THEAUSTODAY***

Bochasanwasi Akshar purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha, the organisation that runs the temple. Also, there are no reports yet of any official action against the vandalisation that took place on Monday morning.

"Earlier today, the Edmonton BAPS Mandir was vandalised with paint, displaying hateful rhetoric on the walls of what should be a place of refuge. Hate has no part in Canada - much less in places of worship & prayer," said Randy Boissonnault, Member of Parliament. A statement from the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce (CHCC), dedicated to promoting the interests of the Hindu business community in Canada, said, "The act of vandalism is not only an attack on a physical structure but also an affront to the sentiments of the Hindu community and the principles of respect and tolerance that our society holds dear." *—PTI*

# MARKET TUMBLES POST BUDGET

## BSE plunges 1,266.17 points to 79,235.91; Nifty tanks 435.05 points to 24,074.20

**MUMBAI, 23 JULY**

Stock market benchmarks Sensex and Nifty tanked after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a hike in STT (Securities Transaction Tax) on F&O (Futures and Options) securities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped as soon as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman began presenting the Budget for 2024-25. But, within minutes it slipped in the red and later plummeted 1,266.17 points to 79,235.91 during the afternoon trade.

The NSE Nifty also ticked higher as the finance minister began the presentation of her 7th Union Budget in the Lok Sabha. However, volatile trends soon came in and the benchmark later tanked 435.05 points to 24,074.20.

The BSE benchmark had climbed 264.33 points to 80,766.41 in early trade. The Nifty went up 73.3 points to 24,582.55.

Sitharaman said the government plans to raise the capital gains exemption limit on certain financial assets to Rs 1.25 lakh per year for the middle and upper middle class.

Presenting the Budget for 2024-25, she announced a hike in STT (Securities Transaction Tax) on F&O (futures and options) securities by 0.02 per cent and 0.1 per cent.

Among the Sensex pack, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finance, Power Grid, Reliance Industries, State Bank of India and Bajaj Finserv were the major laggards.

Titan, ITC, Hindustan Unilever and Adani Ports were among the biggest gainers. —*PTI*

Titan, ITC, Hindustan and Adani Ports were biggest gainers **PHOTO: ANI**

### NSE

**TOP GAINERS**

**Titan** 3,466.85 (+212.40 or 6.53%)

**ITC** 492 (+25.65 or 5.50%)

**Tata Consumer** 1,256.90 (+52.10 or 4.32%)

**Torrent Pharma** 3,138.70 (+108.90 or 3.59%)

**Godrej Consumer** 1,516.70 (+46.55 or 3.17%)

**TOP LOSERS**

**IRFC** 194.14 (-10.44 or 5.11%)

**Power Finance Corp** 523.55 (- 21.05 or 3.87%)

**RECL** 595.25 (- 23.55 or 3.81%)

**Bharat Electronics** 301.45 (-10.85 or 3.47%)

**Siemens** 6,789 (-234.45 or 3.34%)

***SOURCE: BSE & NSE India***

### BSE

**TOP GAINERS**

**Godrej** 1518.45 (+47.75 or 3.25%)

**Adani Ports** 1508.25 (+41.45 or 2.83%)

**Dabur** 654.00 (+17.50 or 2.75%)

**Federal Bank** 198.00 (+5.05 or 2.62%)

**NTPC** 382.35 (+8.80 or 2.36%)

**TOP LOSERS**

**IRCTC** 972.95 (-33.05 or 3.29%)

**HAL** 4855.45 (-142.10 or 2.84%)

**Siemens** 6797.20 (-227.05 or 3.23%)

**Hindalco** 653.10 (-19.40 or 2.88%)

**PFC** 523.20 (-21.30 or 3.91%)

### Property sale of Rs 50 lakh or more to attract TDS

Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) of one per cent will apply on sale of an immovable property valued at Rs 50 lakh and more, even if there are multiple buyers and sellers involved in the transaction. A clarification in this regard was provided by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman amid cases of misinterpretation of tax provisions. It was said that one per cent TDS will be applicable for transfer of immovable property involving multiple sellers or buyers wherein the aggregate consideration is Rs 50 lakh or more. —*PTI*

# Budget earmarks ₹1.28L crore for telecom; BSNL gets lion's share

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

The government has proposed the allocation of Rs 1.28 lakh crore for telecom projects and public sector firms under the telecom ministry with a majority of funds earmarked for state-owned BSNL.

Of the total proposed allocation, over Rs 1 lakh crore is meant for BSNL and MTNL-related expenses, including Rs 82,916 crore infusion in BSNL for technology upgradation and restructuring at BSNL.

**PHOTO: @BSNL.CO.IN**

The budget has proposed to allocate Rs 17,510 crore for pensionary benefits of the employees of the Department of Telecommunications, including employees absorbed in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd and employees of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd with effect from April 1, 2014.

The government has proposed to allocate Rs 3,668.97 crore for payment of principal amount of MTNL bonds. —*PTI*

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Delay for payment of TDS up to due date of filing statement decriminalised
- Amendment of Central excise duty is being amended to extend the time period for submission of the final Mega Power Project certificate from 120 months to 156 months
- GST Compensation Cess is exempted on imports in Special Economic Zone (an area in which the business and trade laws are different from the rest of the country) by SEZ units or developers for authorised operations
- I-T assessment can be reopened beyond 3 years up to five years only if the income is Rs 50 lakh or more

# Govt cuts borrowing target to ₹14.01 lakh cr

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

The government has lowered its borrowings estimate for the current financial year to 14.01 lakh crore as there is an improvement in tax collection.

The gross market borrowings have now been revised downward to Rs 14.01 lakh crore from Rs 14.13 lakh crore estimated in the interim Budget presented in February.

"The gross and net market borrowings through dated securities during 2024-25 are estimated at Rs 14.01 lakh crore and Rs 11.63 lakh crore, respectively. Both will be less than that in 2023-24," Sitharaman said .

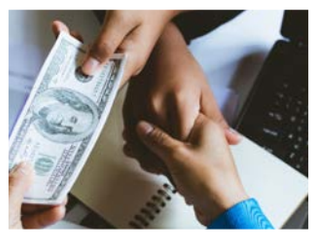


**PHOTO: FREEPIK**

The gross and net borrowings in BE 2024-25 are 9.2 per cent and 1.5 per cent lower than gross borrowings of Rs 15.43 lakh crore and net borrowing of Rs 11.80 lakh crore in RE 2023-24 —*PTI*

**PHOTO: UNSPLASH**

# SUBSIDY BILL CUT BY 7.8% TO ₹3.81L CRORE

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

In a move that signals fiscal prudence, the government reduced its subsidy outlay for food, fertiliser, and fuel by 7.8 per cent in the full Budget for 2024-25, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

The total subsidy allocation stands at Rs 3,81,175 crore for the current fiscal, down from the previous year's figure of Rs 4,13,466 crore.

This reduction aligns with the estimates projected in February's interim budget.

Breaking down the allocations, the food subsidy has been set at Rs 2,05,250 crore, a decrease from the revised estimates of Rs 2,12,332 crore for the fiscal ending 31 March, 2024.

This subsidy covers the difference between the economic cost of foodgrains procured by the government and their sales realisation under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and other welfare schemes, benefiting approximately 80 crore individuals.

The fertiliser subsidy has seen a more significant cut, with Rs 1,64,000 crore earmarked for 2024-25 against the revised estimates of Rs 1,88,894 crore for the previous fiscal.

Petroleum subsidies, primarily for cooking gas (LPG), have been marginally reduced to Rs 11,925 crore, down from Rs 12,240 crore in the 2023-24 revised estimates. —*PTI*

# GOVT SCRAPS ₹30K CR CAPITAL TO OIL FIRMS

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

The government has scrapped the Rs 30,000 crore equity infusion it had planned in state-owned fuel retailers after they made record profits in the fiscal year ended 31 March, according to the Budget Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented on Tuesday. The capital support to the oil companies was halved to Rs 15,000 crore and the plan for filling strategic underground storage was deferred. —*PTI*

# Amount on share buyback to be treated as dividend

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said buyback of shares will be taxed in the hands of shareholders similar to dividend from 1 October, a move that will increase the tax burden on investors.

Further, the cost paid by the shareholder to acquire these shares will be considered for computation of capital gains or loss to them.

"For reasons of equity, I propose to tax income received on buyback of shares in the hands of the recipient," Sitharaman said in her Budget speech.

It has been proposed that the income from buyback of shares by companies be chargeable in the hands of the recipient investor as dividend, instead of the current regime of additional income-tax in the hands of the company.

Experts said the government move can increase the burden on investors, besides, there might be a decline in the number of buybacks.

Henceforth, companies will be now using it only wherever they genuinely feel the need for capital reduction and not for distribution of profits. —*PTI*

# Budget evokes mixed response from tea industry

**KOLKATA, 23 JULY**

The budget for 2024-25 presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament on Tuesday evoked mixed reactions from the tea industry.

Tea Association of India (TAI), a leading producer's body, said that the scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Shramik Protsahan Yojana (PMCSPY) devised for the welfare of tea workers, especially women and their children in Assam and West Bengal, is a welcome move.

Secretary of the Association of Tea Auctioneers (ATA) Sujit Patra, however, said apparently there is nothing for the tea industry in the budget for 2024-25.

The government has earmarked Rs 1000 crore for implementing the scheme, TAI said, adding that it is aimed at making need-based interventions in the tea growing areas for strengthening provisions of education and health services to the workers.

The proposals to provide resilience to the agriculture sector will help the tea industry, TAI said.

The government has particularly emphasised the need for employment generation and skilling from which the tea industry will benefit immensely, the association said.

The continuation of PMAY (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana) and PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadark Yojana) will surely benefit the rural population including those residing within the tea gardens, the association said. —*PTI*

## LEGISLATIVE CHANGES IN GST & CUSTOMS LAWS

### Amendments in the Customs Act, 1962

Section 28 DA is being amended to enable the acceptance of different types of proof of origin that includes, information such as manner in which country of origin criteria, regional value content and product specific criteria, provided in trade agreements.

**a.** Amendment to keep Extra Neutral Alcohol (It is the most pure version of any alcohol) outside the purview of central tax

**b.** Amendment to regularise non-levy and short-levy of central tax

**c.** The time limit to avail input tax credit has been relaxed by increasing the days to 60 days from 30 days.

**d.** The maximum amount of pre-deposit for filing appeal with the Appellate Authority is being reduced from Rs 25 crore of central tax to Rs 20 crore of central tax.

**e.** Amendment to make filing of monthly returns by TDS deductors mandatory.

## CUSTOM DUTY CHANGES

**REDUCTION**

**Agricultural Products**
FROM 30% TO 15%

**Medical Equipment**
FROM AS APPLICABLE TO NIL

**Shipping Sector**
AS APPLICABLE TO NIL

**INCREASE**

**Renewable Sector**
FROM 7.5% TO 10%

**Roasted nuts and seeds, including areca nuts**
FROM 30% TO 150%

**Laboratory Chemicals**
FROM 10% TO 150%

# GOLD TUMBLES TO ₹69,016 OR 5% PER 10 GRAMS

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

Gold prices plummeted by 5 per cent or Rs 3,702 to Rs 69,016 per 10 grams in futures trade on Tuesday after the government proposed to hike the securities transaction tax on futures and options trade.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for August delivery plunged Rs 3,702 or 5.09 per cent to Rs 69,016 per 10 grams in a business turnover of 12,397 lots.

Silver prices also tumbled more than 5 per cent in futures.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, silver contracts for delivery declined by Rs 4,704 or 5.27 per cent to Rs 84,499 per kg in turnover of 25,350 lots. Globally, gold was trading 0.08 per cent higher at USD 2,444 per ounce in New York. —*PTI*

**CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR SAYS**

# *'Rich nations' climate actions are hypocritic*

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

India's Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran has criticised developed countries for their "double standards" on climate action, highlighting the G7's commitment to ending the use of unabated coal power plants only in the first half of the 2030s, despite their high carbon emissions.

In the annual economic survey, Nageswaran said it is morally wrong to ask developing countries to abandon their aspirations for better living standards to allow developed countries to maintain their lifestyles in cleaner environments and cooler climates.

He argued that economic growth would empower developing countries to better address climate change.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran **PHOTO: PTI**

Criticising the rich nations' "double standards", he pointed out that the UK postponed its decision to ban the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030 to 2035, and Germany diluted its rules for banning fossil fuel boilers before they could be passed.

Nageswaran said developed countries, having relied on fossil fuel-based growth strategies for the past two centuries, are now pushing for ambitious emissions cuts from nations.

Over the years, India and other countries from the Global South have faced increased pressure from some developed countries to rapidly "phase down" unabated coal power at international forums, especially the annual UN climate conferences.

Countries agreed to limit global average temperature rise to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius and "preferably" to 1.5 degrees Celsius to prevent further worsening of climate impacts —*PTI*

# Rupee falls 5P to close at all-time low post Budget

**MUMBAI, 23 JULY**

The rupee declined 5 paise to hit an all-time low of 83.71 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday after the government raised tax rates on capital gains in the FY25 Budget.

Besides, a weak tone in the US dollar and weakness in crude oil prices also put pressure on the domestic unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.64 and touched an intraday high of 83.61 and touched an all-time intraday low of 83.71 against the dollar during the trading session.

It finally settled at an all-time low of 83.71 (provisional) against the American currency, registering a fall of 5 paise from its previous close.

**PHOTO: FREEPIK**

On Monday, the rupee consolidated in a narrow range to settle 4 paise higher at 83.66 against the American currency.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading higher by 0.03 per cent at 104.34. —*PTI*

# Khelo India once again gets lion's share in Union Budget

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

Khelo India, which is the government's flagship project to promote sports at the grassroots level, was once again the biggest beneficiary in the union budget for the sports ministry as it was assigned Rs 900 crore from the overall allocation of Rs 3,442.32 crore on Tuesday.

Kehlo India's share, announced in the budget presented by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman here, is Rs 20 crore more than the revised allocation of Rs 880 crore during the previous financial year.

With the Olympic cycle set to come to an end in Paris in August this year, and the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games still two years away, the budget for the Sports Ministry has seen only a marginal increase of Rs 45.36 crore from the previous cycle.

The budget for the previous cycle was Rs 3,396.96 crore for the previous financial year.

The government has invested heavily in Khelo India over the years as the programme continues to unearth talent from all parts of the country.

While Khelo India's actual allocation in 2022-23 stood at Rs 596.39 crore, it was increased by more than Rs 400 crore, to Rs 1,000 crores, in the 2023-24 budget, before being revised to Rs 880 crore.

The government has continued to add programmes ever since the inaugural Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) were held in 2018.

The ministry added the Khelo India University Games in 2020, before also launching the Khelo India Winter Games the same year and the Khelo India Para Games in 2023.

PHOTO: KHELO INDIA

Hundreds of Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE) have been set up across the country, which aim to provide facilities for athletes with potential. Several Khelo India athletes are currently in India's Olympic-bound contingent.

The government's assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) has also seen an increase of Rs 15 crore -- from Rs 325 crore in 2023-24 to Rs 340 crore in the latest budget.

The budget for Sports Authority of India, which apart from maintaining its stadia across the country also manages the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) to prepare athletes for the global sporting extravaganzas, has also been enhanced from Rs 795.77 crore to Rs 822.60 crore, which is a jump of Rs 26.83 crore.

The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) and the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL), which does all the testing, have received marginal increases in their budgets.

While NADA's budget has gone up from Rs 21.73 crore last year to Rs 22.30 crore, NDTL has got Rs 22 crore, up from Rs 19.50 last year.

*—PTI*

## LeBron James scores final 11 points for US

**PARIS, 23 JULY**

On Friday, LeBron James will carry the U.S. flag. But first, he carried the U.S. men's basketball team. James scored the final 11 points for the Americans down the stretch, and the four-time reigning Olympic gold medalists held off World Cup champion Germany 92-88 in London on Monday night in their final tune-up before the Paris Games start later this week. Announced earlier in the day as the male flagbearer for the Americans in Friday night's opening ceremony down the River Seine the female flagbearer will be revealed Tuesday James came through time and time again down the stretch, just as he did over the weekend when his layup with 8 seconds left gave the U.S. a 101-100 win over upstart South Sudan.—*PTI*

## Defender Sanatomba Singh signs for FC Goa

**MARGAO, 23 JULY**

FC Goa on Tuesday announced the signing of defender Sanatomba Singh Yanglem ahead of the upcoming Indian Super League season. Yanglem became the Gaurs' seventh signing before the 2024-25 season gets underway, with others being goalkeeper Lara Sharma, defenders Sangwan and Muhammad Hammad, midfielders Iker Guarrotxena and Dejan Drazic and forward Alan Saji. The 18-year-old Yanglem, who is a Reliance Foundation Young Champs academy graduate, has penned a multi-year contract with the club. He helped the RFYC win the 2018-19 sub-junior I-League besides finishing as the runner-up in the 2022-23 MFA (Mumbai Football Association) Super Division.—*PTI*

## Messi and Luis Suárez to miss MLS All-Star Game

**MIAMI, 23 JULY**

Inter Miami star Lionel Messi won't play in the MLS All-Star Game while nursing an ankle injury.The 37-year-old Messi left the July 14 Copa America final win over Colombia with a right ankle injury. His teammate, Luis Suárez, also won't play in the game Wednesday in Columbus, Ohio, with what the team described as "knee discomfort." Both were listed among the unavailable players by the league on Monday. Messi, an eight-time Ballon d'Or winner from Argentina, has missed Miami's wins over Toronto FC and the Chicago Fire. The team said both players' status for Saturday's Leagues Cup opening match at home against Mexican club Puebla "will be assessed based on their daily recovery process." The MLS All-Star Game pits top players from league clubs against players from Mexico's Liga MX.—*PTI*

## Aguirre returns as Mexico's head coach for a 3rd time

**MEXICO CITY, 23 JULY**

Javier Aguirre has been appointed head coach of Mexico's national team for the third time and will replace Jaime Lozano, the Mexican soccer federation confirmed Monday. Rafael Marquez, who played in five World Cups for Mexico and was the coach of Barcelona's reserve team, will be Aguirre's main assistant. The 65-year-old Aguirre led Mexico to the Round of 16 at the 2002 and 2010 World Cups. Mexico was knocked out in that round at every World Cup between 1994 and 2018, then was eliminated in the group stage in 2022. "(Aguirre) is without a doubt the Mexican coach with the longest and most recognized career abroad and he also has in-depth knowledge of the processes in national teams," said Duilio Davino, director of national teams. Davino said Marquez will be Aguirre's assistant for two years under a plan for him to take over as head coach for the 2030 World Cup.
—*PTI*

PARIS GAMES

# How parents helped mould badminton players

## For parents, it's a journey filled with sacrifices, and emotional upheaval

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

Six summers ago, Clifford Crasto left his daughter Tanisha at the Pullela Gopichand Academy in Hyderabad on her 15th birthday, hoping it would give wings to her nascent badminton dreams even if it meant being far away from the comfort of her home in Dubai.

It was a cultural change for Tanisha, who was born in Dubai. But she waddled through that and will now represent India at the Paris Olympics along with her senior women's doubles partner Ashwini Ponnappa.

While there is no guidebook to raise an Olympian, for parents, it's a journey filled with sacrifices, and emotional upheaval. Yet firm decisions have to be taken to help their children grow in sports and life. "I took her to India on her birthday. It was a very brave decision, an emotional decision to leave her alone in a different country," the Goa-born Clifford, who shifted base to work in Dubai, told PTI over phone.

"She was born and brought up in Dubai. So, it was hard for both of us. But we knew that she had taken the right path and we supported her. We are happy with that decision and happy with where she has reached now," he said.

Tanisha showed early promise and emerged as a top player in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

She represented Bahrain and won the women's doubles title at the 2016 Bahrain International Challenge before becoming the youngest singles winner at the UAE Open at 14.

Then Tanisha decided to compete in India, representing Goa from 2017, and won the junior and senior nationals multiple times.

Clifford, who worked at Intel distributors in Dubai for 18 years, had to leave his job to accompany Tanisha in tournaments.
*—PTI*

## Trust is the key: Hockey head coach

**NEW DELHI, 23 JULY**

Building trust was a key target area for India's men's hockey coach Craig Fulton when he took over last year and as the team lands in Paris, hoping to better the Olympic bronze achieved in Tokyo, the South African is confident that his efforts will yield the desired results.

Since taking over 14 months back, Fulton has stressed on the need to develop a strong team spirit, besides focussing more on defence strategically.

"I don't know what was the preparation ahead of Tokyo but since I took over 14 months back my main focus has been on building trust among the group," Fulton told PTI in an exclusive interview from the Paris Games Village.
*—PTI*

### Murray to retire after Paris Olympics

Andy Murray has confirmed he will retire from tennis after the 2024 Paris Olympics. The 37-year-old is planning to play in the singles and doubles at what will be his fifth Games.

Andy Murray
PHOTO: @ANDYMURRAY

"Arrived in Paris for my last ever tennis tournament," Murray wrote on X. "Competing for Team GB has been by far the most memorable weeks of my career and I'm extremely proud to get to do it one final time!" The Scot's first Games appearance was in Beijing in 2008, when he lost in straight sets to Lu Yen-hsun in the first round. Four years later, Murray swiftly put the disappointment of a Wimbledon final defeat by Roger Federer behind him, defeating the Swiss in straight sets at London 2012 to win gold. Also Olympic silver medalist Marketa Vondrousova and Hubert Hurkacz withdrew from tennis in Paris.
*—BBC/AP*

## VONDROUSOVA WITHDRAWS FROM OLYMPICS

**PARIS, 23 JULY**

Tokyo Olympics tennis silver medalist Marketa Vondrousova withdrew from the Paris Games on Monday because of a hand injury.

The 25-year-old from the Czech Republic won Wimbledon last year despite being unseeded and was the runner-up at the French Open — played at Roland Garros, the same site being used for tennis matches at these Summer Games — in 2019.

She is coming off a first-round exit at Wimbledon this month, the first woman since 1994 to lose her opening match a year after winning the title at the All England Club.
*—PTI*

Indian men's cricket team head coach Gautam Gambhir with cricketer Sanju Samson during a training session in Sri Lanka
PHOTO: PTI

## India men's cricket team arrives in SL for white-ball series

**PALLEKELE, 23 JULY**

The Indian men's cricket team under new head coach Gautam Gambhir and captain Suryakumar arrived here via Colombo to a warm welcome, with the recently-crowned T20 world champions playfully mingling with fans and giving them some precious moments. The 15-member India team along with the support staff had left Mumbai on Monday after a pre-departure press conference addressed by Gambhir, who took over Rahul Dravid as the national coach, and BCCI's chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar.

They arrived the same same day in Pallekele after a short layover in Colombo. India will play a three-match T20I series against the home side, who are yet to announce their squad. The Suryakumar-led side will play the first of the three T20Is on July 27, followed by matches on 28 and 30 July.

The team will then travel to Colombo to play three One-day Internationals scheduled for 2, 4 and 7 August
*—PTI*

## India beat Nepal by 82 runs to qualify for semis of women's Asia Cup

**DAMBULLA, 23 JULY**

India sealed their spot in the semifinals with a dominating 82-run win over Nepal in their final group match of the women's Asia Cup here on Tuesday.

Dashing opener Shafali Verma smashed 81 off 48 to power India to 178 for 3. Shafali and fellow opener Dayalan Hemalatha (47 off 42 balls) shared 122 runs for the opening stand to lay the foundation for the total.

Jemimah Rodrigues also chipped in, remaining unbeaten on 28. Smriti Mandhana led the side on Tuesday in place of regular skipper Harmanpreet Kaur who was rested.

For Nepal, Sita Rana Magar picked up two wickets.

India then restricted Nepal to 96 for nine with experienced Deepti Sharma shining bright with the bowl with figures of 3/13. Radha Yadav (2/12) and Arundhati Reddy (2/18) scalped two wickets apiece. Shafali was particularly harsh on medium pacer Kabita Joshi (1/36), smashing her for five boundaries, while off-spinner Sabnam Rai (0/41) too was sent across the line a couple of times.

The dashing opener smacked spinner Rubina Chhetry (0/14) over deep mid-wicket for her first six in the seventh over before picking up another four with a slog-sweep. She completed her fifty in 26 balls in the eighth over.

Hemalatha, who was finding it difficult to get the middle of the bat, then clobbered Joshi for a straight six as India reached 91 for no loss at the halfway stage.

The batter, however, was caught by Rubina after a bit of a juggle off the same bowler as India lost their first wicket with the team at 122 in 14 overs.

Hemalatha struck five fours and a six in her 42-ball innings.

Shafali continued to punish the bowlers, slamming two more fours off Barma but Sita Rana finally got rid of the opener with a tossed up delivery as the keeper did the rest.

**Brief Scores:**

India Women: 178 for 3 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 81; Sita Rana Magar 2/25).

Nepal Women: 96 for 9 in 20 overs (Sita Rana Magar 18; Deepti Sharma 3/13).
*—PTI*

India women's team celebrate after winning the match against Nepal in Sri Lanka on Tuesday
PHOTO: X/@BCCIWOMEN

## Hero Pro Tour: Vidhatri eyes back-to-back wins

**BENGALURU, JUL 23**

Talented golfer Vidhatri Urs, who captured her first title as a professional on the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour last week, will look to make it two in a row as she tees up at the 10th Leg of the tournament at the par-72 Prestige Golfshire here on Wednesday.

The field is once again very strong in the presence of the current Hero OOM leader Hitaashee Bakshi and last year OOM winner Sneha Singh, who have won twice each this year. The field also has Anvitha Narender, winner of the eighth leg, the experienced Amandeep Drall, winner of the fifth Leg, and Neha Tripathi. While Amandeep seeks greater consistency, Neha is trying to make a comeback from a back injury.

Vidhatri, who is related to one of India's top pros Pranavi Urs, has been in excellent form. She was third in her first two appearances and then grabbed a win last week.

Some of the other young pros waiting to make a mark include Durga Nittur, Jasmine Shekar, Gourabi Bhowmick and Karishma Govind.
*—PTI*

## Pakistan closer to Women's Asia Cup semis

**DAMBULLA, 23 JULY**

Pakistan inched closer to a berth in the semi-final of the Women's Asia Cup 2024. On Tuesday, Nida Dar and Co. defeated the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by 10 wickets in a Group A match at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium. However, their fate is dependent on the last Group match between Harmanpreet Kaur's India and Indu Barma's Nepal. Skipper Nida Dar accounted for the wicket of Kavisha Egodage. Theertha Satish tried her heart out with a knock of 40 off 36 balls, laced with five fours, but she did not get enough support from the others. Barring her, only skipper Esha Rohit Oza and Khushi Sharma got into double digits. Pakistan chased down the target with 35 balls to spare. Gul Feroza scored a fifty against Nepal and she backed it up with another handy knock. The 25-year-old stayed not out on 62 off 55 balls with eight fours.

Muneeba Ali survived a stumping scare when she was batting on 10. She made use of the lifeline to stay unbeaten on 37 off 30. The duo put on a partnership of 107 in 14.1 overs to take Pakistan past the finish line.

Pakistan 107 for 0 (Feroza 62*, Muneeba 37*) beat UAE 103 for 8 (Theertha 40, Iqbal 2-11, Tuba 2-17, Sandhu 2-22) by ten wickets.
*—PTI*

Gull Feroza and Muneeba Ali added their second successive century-run opening stand
PHOTO: ASIAN CRICKET COUNCIL

## Asalanka to lead Sri Lanka in T20Is

**PALLEKELE, 23 JULY**

Charith Asalanka was on Tuesday named captain of the Sri Lankan T20 team for the three-match series against India, starting here on 27 July, replacing spin all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga, who stepped down after the team's early exit from last month's T20 World Cup.

He comes with considerable captaincy experience. In the absence of Hasaranga, who was facing suspension due to ICC code of conduct violations, Asalanka had captained Sri Lanka in two T20Is on the tour of Bangladesh earlier this year.

Sri Lanka Cricket Selection Committee opted for several changes following the team's dismal show at the T20 World Cup, where the island nation managed to win only one game and made an early exit.

Overall, the 16-member squad is a good mix of experience and youth.

The Indian team, which will be led by a new captain in Suryakumar Yadav as well, landed here on Monday night for the series, which also features three ODIs scheduled next month.
*—PTI*

NEED OF THE HOUR

# *Sports brings greater emphasis on maternity and parental needs*

**PARIS, 23 JULY**

The support being provided at the Paris Olympics for athletes who are also parents is just part of a larger trend as the rise of women's sports puts greater emphasis on maternity and parental needs.

In France, a nursery is available for athletes' children in the Olympic Village for the first time and private rooms will be provided by organizers for nursing mothers. But the Olympics aren't alone.

FIFA, soccer's global governing body, recently added new policies that expanded on ground-breaking regulations adopted in 2020 that gave athletes access to a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave. The new rules expanded benefits to coaches and gave periods of paid leave to adoptive parents and non-biological mothers.

For athletes in other sports, the US Olympic Committee has introduced the USA New Family Fund, which distributes grants to help parents with things like childcare, infant supplies, and feeding support.

United States defender Casey Krueger
PHOTO: @CASEYKRUEGER

US national soccer team defender Casey Krueger welcomes the greater attention sports is paying to both pregnancy and the needs of athletes who are parents of young children.

For Krueger, it's personal. When she's competing in France beginning this week, she'll have a place to nurse her son.

"I just actually had a conversation with the coaching staff and US Soccer, because they've been in contact with FIFA, just trying to get some logistical things figured out," Krueger said. "I'm still breastfeeding my son so he comes to the stadium with us. And so they've been very accommodating, and they're making sure he has a room, and I'm able to (nurse) before the game. So, I felt incredibly supported."
*—PTI*